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Letter from Camp Bowie, Texas, April 19, 1942

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UNITED STATES ARMY
CAMP BOWIE, TEXAS

April 19, 1942
Hq Btry, 1st Bn
77th Field Artillery

Dear folks

I can imagine you were pretty much surprised to hear and see Jennie & Jean last week-end. Certainly was nice that they could come and visit you folks. I would like to come down and surprise you too, but there doesn't seem to be much chance of that.

We had another nice week again with occasional Texas rains. On Monday we made our 18 mile hike, we started at about 8:15 in the morning and began walking. We walked much slower than we did on Friday so we didn't get nearly as tired. Then to we would hike $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour and rest 15 minutes. At one o'clock we were met with the chow wagons so we had seventy minutes off for dinner, and incidentally it was a good dinner with ice-cream.

dessert. After dinner we began hiking again and came home at about 4:15. My feet stord it all night but one little toe still bled a little. On Tuesday we had our usual training around camp and on Wednesday we had another field problem. This time we almost didn't get any dinner since we couldn't find our chow wagon. We bounced around in our car for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour looking for it before we found it - so we ate around 3 p.m. On Wednesday night all of the men of the 18th Brigade field artillery were called out of the theatres since there was an alert one. But then the 27th wasn't alerted even though the other outfit were in the Brigade so we were kind of expecting it. But it still hadn't come by Friday evening. Friday all day 2 fus and a Lieutenant were out scouting another outfit trying to pick up their guns and see how well they were operating under cover. So we layed in the grass with a pair field glasses from 9 A.M. - 2 p.m. picking up trucks and men about 3 miles away. At 2 p.m. we were taken over to the

outfit and we could see at close range what we had been watching all day. In crossing a pile of rocks we were a little startled by seeing two slithering snakes go sliding by us under a rock. They were big Bull snakes about the size of your wrist and pretty long - I was certainly surprised to see how fast they traveled. We tipped up that rock and teased at them a little and managed to get them to strike. They are non-poisonous but their bites might still hurt.

On Saturday morning we were awakened at 4 a.m. and told it was an alert. So we dressed and packed all our clothes and equipment and were ready to move at 6:15. So then we moved out to the range for breakfast and an inspection of section equipment and then came back into camp. We have these alerts for practice to see how soon all men can be found and ready to go.

Yesterday I got a package from Jimmy and one also from Genevieve so I have lots to eat again. Must close now and write some more letters. Love you all well
Love Ralph